



NILE BASIN DISCOURSE

THE REGIONAL NILE WOMEN'S NETWORK

“WATERING WOMEN” WEBINAR SERIES

EPISODE 3 - 14TH SEPTEMBER 2023

EVENT SUMMARY:

Event Date: 14th September 2023

Duration: 1 hr 58 mins

Topics/Speakers:

- “Gender and Climate Justice”; Dr Sumaia M. Elsayed - Sudan NDF
- “Solutions of Local Communities & Indigenous Women to Enhance Participation in Climate Policy & Action”; Ms Niyonzima Nadine – Burundi NDF

Moderator: Ms Ghada Ahmedein (Chairperson of the RNWN)

No. of Participants: 41 (from Burundi, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lebanon, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, UAE, Uganda)

Technical Support for the Webinar: NBD Secretariat

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Topic 1:

Gender and Climate Justice

Outline:

- Introduction to Gender and Climate Justice
- Do we need to invest in women to solve climate change?
- Knowledge on key gender responsive principles and approaches that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming
- Key gender concepts and principles that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming
- Laid down integrated approaches to gender and climate change and the relevant linkages to specific areas

1) Introduction

Climate justice is the recognition that climate change excessively impacts some communities over others and intensifies underlying systemic inequalities.

People who are more affected by climate change have the fewest resources to adapt, and are also the least responsible for contributions to greenhouse gas emissions that are accelerating climate change; that is climate injustice.

Climate justice occurs when those that have resources to address climate crisis actually use them to protect vulnerable communities. It works to ensure that tools for climate justice reach the hands of the vulnerable especially women who are most often on the frontlines of climate crisis.

To achieve climate justice, we must have environmental justice. Environmental justice means that disadvantaged groups do not shoulder the burden of climate crisis; instead, they are consulted and supported in environmental decisions that affect them.

“Gender” refers to the socio-cultural roles, norms, and values associated with being a man or a woman. These roles, norms, and values determine how women and men prepare for, react to, and recover from climate change impact, and they often cause unequal distribution of power, economic opportunities, and sense of agency.

2) Do we need to invest in women to solve climate change?

Climate change impact is not neutral; it affects women, men, girls, and boys differently due to gender inequalities caused by socioeconomic conditions, cultural beliefs, and traditional practices which have repeatedly put females at a disadvantage.

Women are more vulnerable to climate change. However, they are essential to mitigate climate change. Therefore, investing in women is essential to solving climate change. According to UN Women, if rural women had the same access to opportunities and productive resources, their agricultural production could see a significant increase ranging from 20% to 30%. This enormous potential can be tapped into and used towards climate change action.

3) Knowledge on key gender responsive principles and approaches that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development outlines the necessary elements required for executing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

These include crucial components such as financial resources, capacity-building, technologies, the role of institutions, and data that supports the implementation of relevant policies and measures are also included.

Achieving transformational systemic change for climate justice will require an equally transformative approach to the means of implementation that is gender-responsive and advances the realization of women's human rights.

4) Key gender concepts and principles that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming

Use of a gender responsive approach:

Gender Responsive programming: which includes specific action to try and reduce gender inequalities within communities.

Gender Transformative programming: which is designed around a fundamental aim of addressing root causes of gender inequality within society.

- Employ a gender-responsive approach to guarantee meaningful contributions to the design of better and more transparent interventions that adequately respond to the different needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, leading to more equitable results and ultimately advancing a more inclusive society.
- Incorporate an evaluation of people's climate-related development needs, risks and capacities into an assessment of possible solutions using complementary methods.
- Develop ideas for aligning a spectrum of solutions and mapping them to a project or program plan that will deliver improved outcomes for women and girls, and for everyone.

5) Integrated approaches to gender and climate change and the relevant linkages.

Work with women's organizations:

- Women's community organizations have insights, information, experiences, networks, and resources vital to increasing disaster resilience.
- The time challenges of rapid assessments conspire against fully engaging grassroots and community organizations in the aftermath of a disaster, while in fact most such organizations are already engaged in the immediate response.
- Working with established women's community organizations will therefore increase the efficiency of the recovery and reconstruction efforts

Takeaway points:

- Climate justice is gender justice; gender bonds to promote a resilient economic system. Access to justice is a cornerstone to equipping women to uphold and enforce their rights
- Women are more vulnerable to climate change. However, they are essential to mitigate climate change. Therefore, investing in women is essential to solving climate change.
- People who are more affected by climate change have the fewest resources to adapt, and are also the least responsible for contributions to greenhouse gas emissions that are accelerating climate change; that is climate injustice.
- Moving to transformational systemic change for climate justice will require a transformative approach for implementation that is similar to that of the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda that out-lines the means required for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.
- Measure every decision made and collect data to make evidence-based advocacy on gender and climate justice nexus.
- Work with women's CBOs; they have insights, information, experiences, networks, and resources vital to increasing disaster resilience. People-centred institutions are key to deliver gendered responses on climate justice
- Ensures that the gaps/barriers/challenges preventing the equitable participation of women as decision-makers and beneficiaries can be overcome rather than reinforced.

Topic 2:

Solutions of Local Communities & Indigenous Women to Enhance Participation in Climate Policy & Action.

Outline:

- Introduction
- Context In Which Aboriginal Women Live
- Knowledge on key gender responsive principles and approaches that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming
- Key gender concepts and principles that can be applied in climate justice planning and programming
- Laid down integrated approaches to gender and climate change and the relevant linkages to specific areas

1. Introduction

There are over 370 million indigenous people in the world, living in mostly developing countries. In Burundi, indigenous people are estimated at 1% of the total population. They are largely poor due to social discrimination and marginalization, accompanied by a mortality rate that is increasing exponentially.

Majority live in indecent housing amidst bad weather that threatens the health of especially small children, the elderly and pregnant women. They are victims of climate change that negatively affects their livelihoods; and indigenous women and girls are at the forefront of emergencies caused by the climate crisis including pollution, desertification and biodiversity loss.

2. Context In Which Aboriginal Women Live

Comparable to elsewhere, indigenous women in Burundi are in struggle for the recognition of the collective rights of indigenous people and the advancement of their rights as women in local communities.

Despite the challenges, they are working to make their voices heard at the local, national and international levels, through creation of their own organizations and networks and in collaboration with other social movements.

This is particularly the case of women's organizations and trade unions, in order to defend their demands and priorities in the massive participation in the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change.

While important progress has been made, obstacles to participation in decision-making processes persist especially for indigenous women. The obstacles include:

3. Environmental and economic situation

Financial dependence on men: Most Aboriginal women do not have access to sources of income; mainly depending on their spouses who also do not have much means because of the marginalization suffered by the entire indigenous community.

Lack of infrastructure and essential services: In the context of Burundi, indigenous communities are isolated from the rest of society; far from the infrastructure and services enjoyed by other communities such as schools, health centres, administrative offices, etc. thus limiting their opportunities and means to improve their living conditions.

4. Access to information and communication networks

Limited access to useful information and the often-fragile communication networks are notable barriers to indigenous women's participation in climate policy and action programs.

5. Physical meeting venues

Lack of adequate meeting places due to isolation and marginalization; indigenous women lack physical meeting spaces adapted to their needs such as sanitation facilities tailored for women and separate from the male facilities.

Distance to the meeting places; women have to travel long distances to meeting places. This at the same time limits the number of participants and motivation.

6. Psychological barriers

Psychological barriers to indigenous women's participation and organization were classified into three subtypes: awareness and knowledge; skills and competencies; emotions and motivation

Takeaway points to improve participation of local communities in climate policy and action.

- Support the establishment and functioning of indigenous women's organizations and networks, and to facilitate the exchange of experiences among them, by providing them with appropriate meeting facilities and support services as appropriate.
- Support indigenous women's access to communication technologies and promote skills for climate policy and action

- Encourage opportunities for exchange of experiences and mutual learning between local community and indigenous women's organizations, with a view to jointly identifying barriers, opportunities and strategies for mutual assistance.
- Foster dialogue and collaboration between indigenous women, on the one hand, and trade unions and organizations, on the other, with a view to finding solutions to the problems that indigenous women currently face in improving their participation in climate policy and action
- Promote the participation of indigenous women in the executive committees and thematic commissions of organizations such as indigenous peoples' organizations, trade unions and organizations,
- Strengthen the capacities of indigenous men and women and their traditional leaders with regard to the rights of local communities and indigenous women, international standards and applicable national legislation;
- Ensure indigenous women's access to information on policy and action processes to rules that govern them, with a view to encouraging their participation, and to provide them with technical assistance and training so that they acquire skills in the fight against climate change and environmental.

ACTION POINTS:

- In the next 4th webinar session, information should be shared on the outcomes of the Nairobi Africa Climate Summit 2023. NBD Sec. to follow upon this and provide feedback.
- The next episode of the webinar series will focus on topics that build-up towards preparation of a paper that will be presented at COP28.